

WIOA Measurable Skill Gain Guidance Webinar – November 17, 2020

FAQ Addendum

1. Referencing the session handouts on page 3, #2, what does "or equivalent" mean?

When looking at the Measurable Skill Gain Guidance PDF, under Transcript/Report Card there is a subcategory labeled Postsecondary Education. The description states "Transcript demonstrates a sufficient number of credit hours – which is at least 12 hours per semester (or equivalent) or, for part-time students, a total of at least 12 hours over the course of two completed semesters (or equivalent) during a 12 month period that show a participant is achieving the State unit's academic standards (or the equivalent for their credit hour programs)."

This definition was taken directly from TEGL 10-16 Change 1 and its intention is to be able to take into account varying postsecondary education programs. For example, a postsecondary institution may use a quarter system rather than a semester system. In a semester system, 12 credit hours is considered full time, whereas 6 credit hours may be considered full time in a quarter system. This definition allows for the flexibility to utilize the post-secondary institution's system of calculating full and part time status.

2. Referencing the session handouts on page 3, section 4b/c: if an employer is providing training and provides progress reports, do they have to be in an On-the-job Training (OJT) to get credit for an MSG?

When looking at the Measurable Skill Gain Guidance PDF, page 3 section 4a-c discusses the acceptable documentation for the Training Milestone/Progress Report type of MSG. Specifically, it includes the following options for documenting a Training Milestone/Progress Report:

- a. Documentation of a skill gained (or completed steps) through OJT or Registered Apprenticeship. Completed steps may be a mid-point evaluation, final evaluation, or exam results as required by Registered Apprenticeship program.
- b. Contract and/or evaluation from employer or training provider documenting a skill gain, or training reports on milestones completed as the individual masters the required job skills. Increases in pay resulting from newly acquired skills or increased performance also can be used to document progress if provided as an evaluation from employer.
- c. Progress report from employer documenting a skill gain that the participant has achieved.

More specifically, no, a participant does not have to be in an OJT for the employer to provide documentation for this MSG. As long as a participant is in an education/training program that leads to a postsecondary credential, then if, as in the example given in the question, the employer has provided progress reports documenting the participant's development of skills, that would meet the definition of page 3, section 4c of the guidance and could be entered as a Training Milestone/Progress Report MSG.

Keep in mind:

- For the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, OJT is considered training and would put a participant in the denominator of the MSG measure.
- For the Youth Program, however, OJT is considered to be a work experience, and would not put the participant in the denominator and therefore not count for an MSG.

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3. **Can you provide some examples on skills progression? For example, for Nurse Aid training - how should that be recorded? Is it a Training Milestone, a Skills Progression, and a Credential? What does the class certificate document and what does the state exam/register document?**

Skills Progression MSGs are typically documented by exams or assessments. The Nurse Aid training is a class that is intended to prepare the participant to pass the Nurse Aide I State Competency Exam; therefore, it is the passing of this exam that will count as a Skills Progression MSG. The completion of the coursework could be counted under Training Milestone as long as it had been established as a benchmark in the participant's IEP and then documented with the certificate of completion from the training provider. Once the participant has been licensed by the Division of Health Services Regulation, DHSR, then this can be entered as a credential.

Some additional examples of Skills Progression are: Class A Commercial Driver's License, Certified Nursing Assistance License, CompTIA A+ Certification, component exams of HiSET or GED

4. **Can you clarify about CPR for example? Can someone be in a standalone CPR or Serv Safe training and achieve MSG? Would an activity be required if this were stand alone?**

In order to achieve an MSG, a participant must be in an education or training program leading to a postsecondary credential. Since CPR and Serv Safe do not qualify as credentials, they could not be standalone activities. However, CPR and Serv Safe may count as an MSG if they are required elements in a participant's education/training program. For example, if CPR certification is a requirement to completing CNA training, passing the CPR test/exam and becoming certified could count as an MSG.

5. **Allison said to only use top two for last MSG she went over, not other degrees - can you clarify?**

In Allison's explanation of how to key MSGs in NCWorks, she stated to only use the top two choices (High School Diploma and Secondary/High School Equivalency) when recording the Secondary School Diploma/Recognized Equivalent type of MSG. The entry for this MSG is completed under the Credentials tab, and using either of those two selections will ensure that the system will record both a credential and MSG simultaneously. (The remaining options listed within the Credentials section pertain only to Credentials and not to MSGs.)

6. **For adults, is a WEX considered "work-based training?"**

No, work experience (WEX) is not considered training and therefore does not result in a participant being in the denominator for MSG.

7. **If someone enrolls, for example in May, and begins short term training that will not finish for several months, does that mean that they fail MSG for the first year?**

Unfortunately, it is the case that participants who are enrolled later in the program year will not have time to complete an MSG before the year ends. This is an understood convention of the way the

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performance indicator works and is considered when negotiating state and local goals. Therefore, it is expected that participants will continue to be enrolled as they seek assistance, regardless of when their initial participation may occur. TEGL 10-16, Change 1 notes:

“Programs should not delay enrollment or services to participants until a new program year even if programs believe there is insufficient time for the participant to make any type of measurable skill gain by the end of that program year.”

8. So, if we have Youth Case Managers who have already put On-the-job Training (OJT) information in the MSG section, do they take it out?

Yes, OJT does not count for a Youth MSG and therefore should not be keyed into NCWorks.

9. What documentation is needed for 302 and 441 Entrepreneurial Training, especially if it's not a community college class?

If a participant is enrolled in Entrepreneurial Training, then their IEP should outline the training provider that will be conducting the training and the milestone/benchmarks/skills that will be attained throughout the training period. The IEP should also provide a clear description of the participants entrepreneurial goals and the clear benchmarks that will be achieved along the way. Documentation can include evaluations from the training provider documenting the skill gains or the successful attainment of established milestones/benchmarks. Additionally, if the participant is able to pass any knowledge-based exams that are part of their IEP, then this documentation can be used to document a Skills Progression MSG.

10. Can we still use the HS diploma and/or its equivalent for MSG and Credential?

Yes, it can (and will) be used for both. The High School diploma and/or its equivalent is the documentation used to enter a credential record for the Secondary School Diploma. When the case manager records the High School Diploma and Secondary/High School Equivalency credential, an MSG is automatically recorded by the system.

11. What is an example of an MSG for someone that is taking a class like medical terminology where there is no occupational license exam?

Because an MSG is used to document progress as someone works towards their postsecondary credential or employment, it is important to remember that a participant must be enrolled in such an education or training program leading to a postsecondary credential in order to be eligible to have an MSG properly recorded on their case. Medical terminology typically does not rise to the level of a credential on its own and is more likely a part of a credential program.

When determining what can be counted as an MSG, it is important to look at the goals that are outlined in the participant's IEP. A medical terminology class would need to be a component of the participant's IEP in order to be counted as an MSG. For example, if the participant is in a training program and the

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medical terminology class is required as a part of that training, then documented completion of the class could be recorded as a Training Milestone MSG. Alternatively, if the class is part of a degree program, such as an associate degree, the participant's transcript (assuming it meets the requirements for transcripts outlined in the guidance) could count as an MSG, under the Transcript/Report Card category.

12. Is there a way to achieve a measurable skill gain for a work experience?

No, work experience (WEX) is not considered training and therefore does not count towards an MSG.

13. Due to COVID, some of the Nursing students on my caseload had to take clinicals in the summer. They did not officially complete clinicals until July, but their Diploma's listed their originally intended graduation date in May. What would one do in a situation like this?

COVID-19 is creating a lot of unique situations like the one posed in this question that we have not had to deal with before. The most important thing we can say about entering MSGs in situations like this is be very detailed in your case notes. Explain why a decision was made, or like in this situation, what may be occurring out of normal order. If needed, reach out for additional assistance from your superuser or Regional Analyst.

In this instance, the diploma (bachelor's degree or associate degree, depending on the nursing program) should be recorded as a credential using the date listed on it. Since the participants rolled over into the next program year, the completion of the clinicals could be recorded as a Training Milestone/Progress Report MSG for PY 2020 if they have documentation for the completion of the clinicals. Lastly, once they achieve state licensure as a Registered Nurse, that licensure could also be entered as a credential.

14. What is the difference between a Skills Progression MSG and obtaining a credential? If a customer gets their CDL-A and that is their ultimate goal, would I put in a Skills Progression MSG and a credential?

An MSG should be viewed as a component of an education or training program, whereas a Credential would be the outcome of that education or training program. An MSG is intended to document the participant's progress on the path towards their credential. However, there are situations that may result in the recording of both a credential and an MSG. When a participant intends to get their CDL-A, they typically attend a CDL Training School to prepare them for the CDL exam with the DMV. Completion of the CDL Training School can be recorded as a Training Milestone MSG and, once they pass the DMV's CDL exam, that completion can be recorded as a Skills Progression MSG (because they passed an exam needed for their occupation/training). Lastly, after taking and passing the exam, the participant becomes a licensed CDL-A driver. This licensure should be entered as a Credential. In this example of a participant's path, you could document the receipt of two MSGs and one credential.

Another example of the Skills Progression type of MSG is if a participant is enrolled in an undergraduate IT education program and halfway towards their credential, the participant is given a voucher to take a certification exam such as CompTIA A+. The passing of this exam can be recorded as a Skills Progression

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as the participant progresses on the path towards their ultimate goal, a credential, which in this example is a bachelor's degree.

- 15. So High School diploma (or its equivalent) has to be entered as an MSG and Credential? I had assumed that an MSG could be entered for making progress toward a High School diploma (or its equivalent).**

The completion of a Secondary School Diploma or its Equivalent is an MSG that is automatically recorded when the corresponding credential is entered in NCWorks.

Secondary School Diploma

The only way to record progress on achieving a Secondary School Diploma is under the Transcript/Report Card type of MSG. The participant would be attending classes where they are receiving Transcripts/Reports Cards that meet the State unit's academic standards as follows:

- Must show grades of D or higher and/or be considered passing
- The semester must have occurred within the current program year
- The document must reflect that the participant is in good academic standing: nothing to indicate that the participant dropped out of school or was removed from the institution on academic/conduct grounds

HiSET or General Educational Development (GED) Component Tests

Progress on an HiSET or General Educational Development (GED) can be recorded as a Skills Progression MSG using the results of a component exam as documentation.

- 16. Why isn't work experience (WEX) listed?**

Work experience is not listed because under WIOA, work experience is not considered training and therefore would not count towards an MSG.

- 17. Will there be a back-dating limit on skills attainment entry since the date must match documentation? Asking because NCWorks usually has limitations for frontline staff entering dates after a certain point. We also have to consider delays in customers providing appropriate supporting documentation.**

There should be no limitation on entry of the date for documentation added in support of an MSG. If a particular situation results in an issue, please contact your superuser and/or Regional Analyst. We are not aware of anything in the system currently that would limit the date entered for when the participant received the form of documentation.

- 18. If the customer is dually enrolled in adult and youth and the OJT is done under adult, can it be counted for MSG?**

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For the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, OJT can be used toward an MSG. As the participant progresses through the OJT, experience gained can be documented and keyed as the Training Milestone/Progress Report type of MSG.

- 19. Will an OSY youth who is in ABE or basic skills be included in the MSG denominator? My understanding is that ABE/basic skills is instruction below the 9th grade level.**

The denominator of the MSG calculation for Out of School Youth is determined by receipt of certain service codes. Any of the following service codes will result in an Out of School Youth participant being included in the denominator:

- 407 – Alternative Secondary School services or dropout recovery services
- 416 – Youth Occupational Skills Training - on ETPL
- 424 – NC Registered Apprenticeship Training – Youth
- 429 – Enrolled in Traditional Secondary School (H.S.)
- 430 – Youth Occupational Skills Training - Not on ETPL
- 441 – Entrepreneurial Skills Training

- 20. Do you anticipate that the Version 20 NCWorks upgrade (aka Sapphire) scheduled for December 7th will change how Measurable Skill Gains are entered?**

No, we are not aware of any changes included with the v20 Sapphire upgrade that will have any impact on how MSGs are keyed into NCWorks.

- 21. Is Training Milestone/Progress Report only applicable to OJT and apprenticeships?**

No, the Training Milestone/Progress Report type of MSG is not limited to only OJT or apprenticeships. See FAQ #2 for a further discussion of this topic.

- 22. For Skills Progression type of MSG - are you now allowing CPR certification as an MSG? In the past it was excluded along with things like the Serv Safe food service certifications.**

Previously, CPR and Serv Safe have been excluded as credentials as they do not meet the definition of a credential. CPR or Serv Safe can be used towards an MSG in one of two ways:

- (1) As a Skills Progression MSG if these skills are required as part of the participant's IEP AND the participant had to pass an assessment that documents the acquisition of these skills and knowledge or
- (2) As a Training Milestone/Progress Report MSG if these skills are required as part of the participant's IEP AND the employer/training provider supplies documentation showing the skill gain in the form of a progress report.

- 23. In the document type selection when entering the MSG, can Assessment/Test documentation be added? We do external TABE testing and it is not a school record, but we do not have the correct item to select. (scan area and MSG entry areas)**

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TABE assessment/tests fall under a particular type of MSG themselves: Educational Functional Level (EFL) and should be entered in their particular section as a pre-test and post-test reflecting an EFL gain.

Skill Progression is the type of MSG also associated with the passage of an exam and is defined as: “successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or, progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks, such as knowledge-based exams.”

24. Why would you not use AAS degree completion as a Measurable Skill Gain? (referring to the last part of the MSG Data entry presentation)

An associate degree is considered a credential and is not useable as an MSG by itself. It does not trigger an MSG when it is recorded in the system. Instead, you can use the postsecondary transcript from the community college to key an MSG.

25. Can a certificate of completion from a DOE continuing education program can be entered in Skills Progression?

Any DOE continuing education programs should directly relate to the participant’s IEP AND should culminate with a competency-based assessment. It is the results of this assessment that is the documentation to be used to record the Skills Progression MSG.

26. How are downloads of the presentation slides and handouts accessed?

Both can be found either through the NCWorks Training Center website, www.ncworkforcetraining.com, or through the Staff Online Resources section of NCWorks Online.